



GOVERNOR JINDAL DECLARES PORTION OF ELMER'S ISLAND OPEN FOR PUBLIC ACCESS

Governor Bobby Jindal announced today at a press conference in Grand Isle that Elmer's Island, a once popular destination for coastal fishermen, campers and other outdoor enthusiasts is open again for public recreational use. The state is opening up 250 acres of Elmer's Island for public use after extensive title research found that this portion of the island is the property of Louisiana.

Governor Jindal was joined by Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) Secretary Robert Barham as well as Governor's Office of Coastal Activities Director and Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority Chairman Garret Graves, who highlighted several coastal restoration projects both on and near Elmer's Island that will work to restore beaches and marshes severely damaged by four hurricanes in the last three years.

Photo by Adam Einck



"Louisiana is Sportsman's Paradise - and Elmer's Island is certainly one of our state's jewels - and we are excited to announce that it is now open to the public," said Governor Jindal. "The state will keep this area as a recreation spot and a wildlife sanctuary - while also allowing fishing and bird watching. Louisiana is committed to making sure the beaches and marshes of Elmer's and surrounding areas are restored and enhanced."

Governor Jindal declared that LDWF will manage Elmer's Island as a Wildlife Refuge with boat access to the beach allowed immediately. Efforts will continue to negotiate a right-of-way for a road that will connect the beach to LA Highway 1 to allow vehicular access to the beach in the future.

"After exhaustive legal research, it has been determined that the Goat Island property, which is the barrier island portion of the property generally referred to as Elmer's Island, is state land," said LDWF Secretary Barham. "By

Gov. Jindal looks on as LDWF Sec. Barham explains the department's plans for Elmer's Island Refuge.

designating it a wildlife refuge, the property will be available for fishing and outdoor activities including bird watching, shell collection and nature photography. The only permit needed for site use will be a fishing license for those who choose to do so."

ELMER'S ISLAND - continued on page 2

LDWF Administration

Robert Barham, *Secretary*
Janice Lansing, *Undersecretary*
Randy Pausina, *Asst. Sec., Fisheries*
Jimmy Anthony, *Asst. Sec., Wildlife*

Wildlife & Fisheries Commission

Patrick C. Morrow, *Chairman*
Robert Samanie, III Stephen J. Oats
Earl P. King, Jr. Stephen W. Sagera
Frederic Miller

Division Administrators

Gary Tilyou, *Inland Fisheries*
Karen Foote, *Marine Fisheries*
Kenny Ribbeck, *Wildlife*
Phil Bowman, *Coastal and Nongame*
Col. Winton Vidrine, *Enforcement*





ELMER'S ISLAND - CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Elmer's was a commercial campground and fishing area from 1970-2000. For a small daily fee, fishermen, campers and other outdoor enthusiasts were allowed access to the beach on a narrow road through marsh from Hwy. 1. However, that access was closed following the death of the owner of the access road.

Efforts have been made over the last five years by the state legislature and past administrations to purchase Elmer's Island to allow for public fishing and recreation with no success. The state will continue working with the various property owners in the Elmer's Island vicinity to acquire much of the area for coastal restoration efforts and recreational use.

In addition to opening up Elmer's Island for recreational use, the Louisiana Office of Coastal Protection and Restoration is also working to restore the beach and wetlands in the area to repair significant damage caused by the four hurricanes that have impacted the area over the past three years.

Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav and Ike have all battered the beach, dunes and wetlands of the area known as the Caminada Headlands, a 12-mile stretch of beach and marsh from Grand Isle west to Fourchon.

The Louisiana Office of Coastal Protection and Restoration is dedicating \$71 million over the next two years to a large-scale restoration effort

for the area.

"Restoring our islands and beaches is of the utmost importance," said Coastal Activities Director Garret Graves. "These areas serve as our first line of defense for approaching tropical storms and hurricanes and they also provide essential habitat for bird and marine life."

A \$27 million restoration project on East Grand Terre Island, located less than five miles from the eastern end of Grand Isle, is scheduled to begin in April 2009. In all, state coastal restoration and protection officials have dedicated over \$400 million to the restoration of marshes and beaches in this area of Louisiana over the next two years.

INSHORE SHRIMP SEASON EXTENDED IN PORTION OF ZONE 1

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) has extended the fall inshore shrimp season in that portion of Shrimp Management Zone 1 extending north of the south shore of the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet, including Lake Pontchartrain and Lake Borgne until further notice.

The department is also reminding shrimpers that the fall inshore shrimp season in the remainder of Zone 1 and all of Zones 2 and 3 closed Tuesday, Dec. 16, 2008 at official sunset except in the open waters of Breton and Chandeleur Sounds as described by the double-rig line (LA R.S.56:495.1.(A)2) which will remain open until 6 a.m., March 31, 2009.

The fall shrimp season opening and closing dates were fixed by the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission at its Aug. 7 meeting. However, the commission has provided LDWF Secretary Robert Barham with authority to change the closing dates of the 2008 fall shrimp season if biological and technical data indicate the need to do so.

Current LDWF trip ticket report data have indicated that significant quantities of marketable size shrimp remain in those waters affected by the season extension and this action should provide shrimpers with additional economic opportunities without adverse impacts to the shrimp resource.

Shrimpers are also reminded of the statutory provision which removes the 100 count per pound minimum possession size on white shrimp taken or possessed between Oct. 15 through the third Monday in December of each year.

Following Dec. 15, the minimum possession limit of 100 count per pound on white shrimp taken or possessed onboard a vessel will become effective and the minimum count size will be strictly enforced.

For more information, contact Martin Bourgeois at 225-765-2401 or mbourgeois@wlf.louisiana.gov.



2009 WHITE LAKE NON-CONSUMPTIVE DATES ANNOUNCED

LDWF announced today a list of selected dates between March 10 and July 14, 2009, for public use of facilities at the White Lake Wetlands Conservation Area (WCA).

White Lake WCA is located south of Gueydan in Vermilion Parish. LDWF owns and manages lodge facilities and 71,000 acres of wetlands and marshland. The lodge facilities, accessible only by water, will be available for day-use or overnight use at rental rates that vary based on level of services required by the group using the site. Boat transportation to and from the site will be provided as part of the day use and overnight use access for 2009 group use dates.

"The facilities and landscape would be ideal for birding groups, nature photographers, environmental or wetland ecology students, or small business retreats," said LDWF's Jimmy Anthony, Office of Wildlife assistant secretary. "We can provide site staff for guided boat tours and biologists for lectures on the ecosystem within the conservation area."

White Lake WCA and the surrounding Mermentau River Basin provide habitat for a variety of avian and aquatic species. The property will seasonally have migrant passerine birds, shorebirds, wading birds, rails, gallinules, and the common moorhen. Hawks and owls are also common. Coastal terns and gulls use habitat contained on White Lake at times. Several large breeding rookeries of waders are present on the property. Most notably, along Blackfish Bayou, buttonbush growth supports a rookery with a large number of black-crowned night herons.

SCHEDULE FOR NON-CONSUMPTIVE ACTIVITIES AT WHITE LAKE WCA

Day trips: March 24; April 14 and 21; May 5 and 19; June 2 and 23; and July 7 and 14.

Overnight trips: March 10-11; April 7-8; May 12-13; and June 9-10.

FEE SCHEDULE FOR WHITE LAKE WCA FACILITY USE

Day Use

\$300 - Includes one-day use of Lodge for meetings with no food or drink or additional services provided by LDWF. (For up to 15 people.)

\$300 + \$10/person - Includes one-day use of Lodge for meetings with coffee, cold drinks and bottled water provided. (For up to 15 people.)

\$300 + \$20/person - Includes one-day use of Lodge for meetings with coffee, cold drinks, bottled water and lunch provided. Lunch provided (for up to 15 people) will consist of a sandwich tray and chips or something similar. It will not include a hot lunch.

Exemptions from day-use Lodge rental fee: State agencies, local and federal agencies, and universities conducting research, or educational activities, conducted in cooperation with LDWF. Costs for beverages or lunch may apply (\$10/person for drinks, \$20/person for drinks and lunch).

Overnight Use

\$400 + \$25/person/night -- Includes overnight stay at Lodge with only linens provided. (For up to 12 people.)

\$400 + \$35/person/night -- Includes

overnight stay at Lodge with coffee, cold drinks, bottled water and linens provided. (For up to 12 people.) \$900 + \$35/person/night -- Includes overnight stay at Lodge with coffee, cold drinks, bottled water, meals (breakfast, lunch and supper) and linens provided. (For up to 12 people.)

Exemptions from overnight Lodge rental fee: State agencies, local and federal agencies, and universities conducting research, or educational activities, conducted in cooperation with LDWF. Costs for beverages or lunch may apply (\$10/person for drinks, \$20/person for drinks and lunch).

Skeet Range (optional activity for groups using site for scheduled events) \$10/person/25 clay pigeons. \$15/person/25 clay pigeons, 25 shotgun shells provided. Exemptions - Any persons using the skeet range at LDWF-sponsored events.

Boat Tours (optional activity for groups using site for scheduled events) \$10/person/ride. Limited to authorized function attendees.

Exemptions: Any state, local or federal agency working in cooperation with the LDWF on cooperative initiatives or universities/conservation organizations working with LDWF on cooperative research projects, or educational activities conducted in cooperation with LDWF.

For more information, visit the LDWF Web site at www.wlf.louisiana.gov and click on 2008 White Lake Non-Consumptive Dates under LA ANNOUNCEMENTS, or call 337-479-1894.



ILLEGAL GILL NETTERS APPREHENDED IN ORLEANS PARISH

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Enforcement Division agents cited three mullet fishermen on Oct. 30 for alleged commercial fishing violations.

Ryan N. Guerra, 33, of St. Bernard, was cited for taking commercial mullet during illegal hours, improper running lights, failure to comply with personal flotation device requirements, failure to display a valid registration decal and improper boat numbers. Ronnie Cornwall, 38, of Violet, and Conrad Dial, 28, of Ponchatoula, were each cited with taking commercial mullet during illegal hours.

At approximately 6:50 p.m., agents observed a large black mullet boat operating without navigation lights in the Intracoastal Waterway. Agents observed the people on board the vessel deploy and retrieve a large mullet strike net with a large number of mullet inside the net.



Louisiana law prohibits the commercial take of mullet after legal sunset. The agents seized the 805 pounds of mullet and a 1,200-foot strike net.

The penalty for taking commercial mullet during illegal hours is a fine from \$900 to \$950, jail time up to 120 days, or both, plus court costs and forfeiture of anything seized in connection with the investigation.

Louisiana law requires a mandatory mullet permit suspension for a conviction of illegal fishing. Upon first conviction, there is a mandatory one-year suspension. Upon a second conviction, there is a mandatory two-year suspension. A third conviction results in the fishermen being suspended from the industry for life.

The penalty for the boating safety violations is a fine of \$50, or jail time up to 15 days, or both for each of the four violations.

Agents participating in the case were Sgt. Kris Bourgeois, Sgt. Jason Russo, Senior Agent Garry Pierce, Senior Agent Jason Gernados, Agent Tim Fox and Agent Doug Danna.

For more information, contact Captain Stephen McManus at 504-284-2023 or smcmanus@wlf.louisiana.gov.

This will be the last LDWF Public Information Newsletter. However, you can still get the same articles and information from our Web site at www.wlf.louisiana.gov/news. Please bookmark this page.

LDWF's weekly news gets posted every Tuesday afternoon/evening. LDWF also posts time sensitive news on a daily basis as the need arrives and issues their post Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission news on the first Thursday of every month. Thanks for subscribing to this newsletter.

